this alliance agreement in the short-run as well as long run?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Air India has entered into Co-operative Services arrangements with various foreign airlines such as United Airlines, Scandinavian Airways System, Air Mauritius, Malaysian Airlines, Kuwait Airways and Gulf Air. Broad based alliances are also being explored with Air France, United Airlines, Continental Airlines and Singapore Airlines. These arrangements help Air India to expand its network and market reach without heavy investments. In the short run it also serves as a bridge mechanism to meet Air India's expansion objectives till it is able to augment its own fleet.

Discovery Channel

5274. SHRI. SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Discovery Channel will not be converted into a 'Pay Channel' atleast till January 1, 1999 and reported in observer of Business and Politics, New Delhi dated February 6, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) the rationale behind this; and

(e) the utility of the Discovery Channel and whether it will be Indianised so far its audio-feed programmes are concerned?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI. S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (e) Discovery channel is being operated by a private entrepreneur disseminating programmes from abroad through a foreign satellite. The Government therefore, currently does not have any information relating to the rationale behind this channel, its utility and whether it will be Indianised etc.

[Translation]

Recruitment of Class IV Employees

5275. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA:

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are large number of class IV vacancies in reserved category for SC/ST and other backward classes for a long time in Northern Railway Headquarters, Baroda House, New Delhi;

(b) whether the candidates sponsored by the Employment exchange have been waiting for their interview for a long time; and

(c) if so, the time by which all the formalities regarding selection of candidates are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Selective Eviction from SCR Quarters

5276. SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn towards news-item captioned "Selective eviction from SCR quarters" appearing in 'Deccan Chronicle', dated January 4, 1997.

(b) if so, out of about 3,000 railway quarters how many quarters have been illegally let out/leased to non-railway employees or outsiders and how many have been evicted;

(c) the reasons for serving eviction notices concentrated in places like Chikalguda and Bhoiguda only and higher type of quarters are selectively left out;

(d) the action being taken to see that illegally let out/leased out higher type of quarters are evicted and genuine claimants are given the quarters;

(e) whether any special cell has been constituted to take up and monitor the progress of work on a time-bound basis; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Investigations were carried out which revealed 45 cases of subletting of Railway Quarters. Whenever there is a case of subletting, action is taken as per extant rules viz. serving notices for eviction of the outsiders residing in the railway quarters and initiating Disciplinary Proceedings against the staff responsible for subletting. In this case also similar action has been initiated and there has been no case of selective serving of eviction notices.

(e) and (f) Colony Committee set up are to identify the cases of un-authorised occupation/subletting of quarters and carry out necessary investigations and the position is monitored by the Estate Officer.

Laying of Railway Lines in HP

5277. SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the railway routes proposed for laying railway lines during 1997-98 in Himachal Pradesh;